United Nations A/66/PV.42

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session

Official Records

42nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 25 October 2011, 3.15 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Al-Nasser ..... (Qatar)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Cazeau (Haiti), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 41 (*continued*)

Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/114)

Mr. Jahangiri (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran voted in favour of resolution 66/6, and would like to put on record the following explanation of vote following the resolution's adoption.

The overwhelming support for the resolution reflects yet again the common understanding and will of the international community concerning the inhuman and illegitimate embargo imposed by the United States on the Cuban Government and people. Depriving civilian populations of their economic and social rights infringes upon their basic human rights and is therefore illegal. Indeed, this is the main feature of sanctions as we know them today. Economic blockades and sanctions are completely illegitimate for the following reasons.

There is no case of economic sanctions against developing countries or territories where arrogant Powers are not behind those sanctions. Such sanctions have become a tool not for encouraging international peace and security but for imposing the hegemonic intentions of big Powers on other nations. Worst of all, sanctions, including ostensibly legitimate examples, always end by targeting the daily lives of civilians, with a dramatic impact on people's basic human rights. The victimization of ordinary, innocent people is a sine qua non of sanctions. There is ample evidence that sanctions above all imperil the economic growth and prosperity of civilians.

Despite all the damage that sanctions do, they have been proven to be futile. There is no strong proof that independent nations will compromise their valued national interests because of sanctions that reflect the antagonistic will of a hegemonic Power. The argument that sanctions are a better option than more peaceful measures is also irrelevant. Warmongers are not concerned about the sequence of punitive measures. They will undoubtedly resort to force whenever they deem necessary, with or without first using other means and with or without United Nations approval. Sanctions will not stop them from exercising force should they themselves find that desirable.

However, the most unjustifiable and deplorable form of sanctions is the imposition of unilateral blockades and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws on the part of one State, which, unsurprisingly, happens to be the United States of America. These affect not only the population on whom sanctions are imposed but also the interests of third parties, which are disproportionately and unreasonably punished. Numerous international documents have called for the immediate nullification of all such measures; indeed, one may wonder what

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more can be done to convince the Government of the United States to lift the inhuman and futile economic blockade against the Government and people of Cuba; what more should be said in arguing that such illegal measures flagrantly violate the United Nations Charter, the rule of international law, the multilateral trading system, the standards and principles governing relations among States, as well as the clear will of the international community — the will that has been unequivocally expressed in so many resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

The unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States serves no purpose other than inflicting tremendous hardship and suffering on ordinary civilians, especially women and children. The embargo has seriously jeopardized the legitimate rights and interests of Cuba and other States. It runs counter to the principles of international law and contradicts the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly rejects, and remains opposed to, the application of unilateral economic and trade measures by one State against another, as well as to the extraterritorial application and effects of national legislation on the sovereignty of other States. We oppose and condemn these measures or laws and their continued application and will do everything to effectively thwart them. We urge other States to do likewise and to refrain from recognizing, adopting or implementing extraterritorial or unilateral coercive measures or laws, including unilateral economic sanctions, other intimidating measures and arbitrary travel restrictions that are designed to exert pressure on other countries, threaten their sovereignty, independence and freedom of trade and investment, and prevent them from exercising their right to make decisions through their own free will.

The Islamic Republic of Iran shares the concern of the Cuban people and Government, and therefore emphasizes the urgent need to put an end to such inhuman measures against Cuba and other developing countries and to fully implement the resolution just adopted.

In conclusion, sanctions, whosoever imposes them and under whatsoever pretext or guise, remain illegitimate, futile and misguidedly punitive.

Mrs. Chikava (Zimbabwe): I too would like to commence with an expression of condolences to the Government and people of Turkey, who have been so tragically affected by the recent earthquake. We also acknowledge the presence here today of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba. He is most welcome to witness our deliberations.

I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba (A/66/114). I also associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Argentina, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

For the past 20 consecutive years, an overwhelming number of the States Members of the United Nations have voted in favour of the resolution calling for the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba. Each year we have made it clear that the blockade is not only in violation of international law but it is also counter to the purposes and principles of the United Nations set forth in its Charter, of which the United States of America is itself a founding signatory. The embargo violates Cuba's right to do business with the rest of the international community and, in the process, frustrates the country's efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It is clear that the embargo denies Cuba access to markets, development aid from international financial institutions and technology transfers, which are all important for the development of the Cuban economy and for the well-being and advancement of its people.

My country, Zimbabwe, fully understands the difficulties associated with these illegal and ill-conceived measures, as we are also a victim of similar unilateral measures. We reject the passing of laws and regulations on weaker and small nations by the more powerful with the goal of destabilizing them for regime change purposes. The people of Cuba must be left to themselves to pursue their own economic and social development agenda.

One of the ironies resulting from such pernicious measures is the bringing together of the Government and people of the country under punishment. National pride takes root to defeat this foreign interference. As we have done in the past, my delegation expresses its solidarity with the Government and the people of Cuba. Accordingly, we voted in favour of resolution 66/6.

Mr. Morejón (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I welcome the presence in the Hall of Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba. Through him, we once again express to our brother country of Cuba our most sincere congratulations on this new triumph of the truth.

The great support that resolution 66/6 received in the voting is practically tantamount to a unanimous adoption, which makes this vote a historic one. Following the logic of common sense, this repeated appeal by the General Assembly should be sufficient to put an end to the cruel blockade against Cuba. The delegation of Ecuador voted in favour of resolution 66/6, as we believe that it is totally unacceptable to extend unilateral the extraterritorial measures against a third country, such as those contained in the United States Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.

The blockade imposed against the brother Republic of Cuba is in violation of the fundamental tenets of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the principles governing peaceful relations among States. The blockade causes serious economic and social damage to the Caribbean region and indeed has brought a humanitarian crisis of great magnitude to the brotherly Cuban people, as Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla explained to us in detail this morning.

In supporting resolution 66/6, Ecuador joins the majority of voices issuing from the States Members of the United Nations that demand without delay the immediate and unconditional end to all the unilateral measures imposed against our dear brother Republic of Cuba.

I repeat that Ecuador trusts that the logic of common sense and justice will prevail so that Cuba may enjoy its legitimate right to move forward without this searing and cruel blockade.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): Nigeria voted in favour of resolution 66/6. I would like to highlight the following salient issues that informed our action. Before doing so, however, let me commend the Secretary-General for his report (A/66/114) on the implementation of resolution 65/6, which calls for an end to the unilateral imposition of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. I would also commend Member States for their positive response to the request contained in that resolution.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Argentina and Egypt, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively. We also associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Kenya, who spoke on behalf of the Group of African States.

Nigeria is fully committed to the purposes and principles of the United Nations as contained in the Charter of the Organization, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation. Nigeria believes in the inalienable right of every State to decide on the development model that suits its environment and people. In this regard, Nigeria maintains friendly relations with all States and does not favour unilateral punitive measures to settle political disputes, especially when applied extraterritorially.

My delegation is not comfortable with the continuation of the economic embargo imposed on Cuba, because of the obvious adverse economic impact and humanitarian consequences it has brought to the Cuban people. The embargo runs counter to the principles of multilateralism, international law, sovereignty and free trade — principles that we hold dear and which this body has nobly championed over the years. Thus, together with the overwhelming majority of the international community, Nigeria opposes the needless punishment of an innocent people and therefore favours dismantling not only the structures set up to enforce the embargo but also the logic underpinning its existence. It is against that backdrop that my delegation voted for the resolution.

Nigeria is not oblivious to certain positive effects of opposing the embargo. Although such a response is long overdue, Nigeria is nonetheless heartened by, and indeed welcomes, the position taken by the United States to remove a number of restrictions on travel to Cuba from the United States.

We reiterate that concerted engagement and peaceful negotiation remain the only acceptable means for advancing long-term peace and stability. We therefore appeal to the international community to exert all the possible necessary pressure on both Cuba and the United States to exercise more flexibility in moving towards greater constructive and productive

engagement, with a view to reaching a definitive resolution of their differences.

Such a démarche would lead not only to the lifting of the longest-lasting trade embargo in human history, but also to an improvement in the dignity of human coexistence and to the maintenance of international peace.

Mr. Thu (Myanmar): I take the floor to explain my delegation's position on resolution 66/6, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

Since the resolution was first introduced, at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in 1992, my delegation has taken a principled position to side with the people of Cuba, in particular the elderly, women and children. We hold a sympathetic view that the hardship and suffering caused by the unilateral sanctions dramatically affect the innocent people of Cuba. Myanmar fully subscribes to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, especially the principle of the sovereign equality of nations.

We firmly believe that only through peaceful coexistence and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries can international peace and security be sustainable. The true views of the international community are vividly expressed yearly by the adoption of this resolution, which calls for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo. The embargo against Cuba not only contradicts the principles of the Charter of the United Nations but also deviates from international law. For those reasons, as in previous years, Myanmar voted in favour of resolution 66/6.

Mr. Almeida (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): The economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba is an issue that has been before us for virtually 50 years. Today, for the twentieth time in its history, the General Assembly almost unanimously rejected the embargo. Once again, Brazil has asserted its unwavering support for that cause, voting in favour of resolution 66/6.

Among the many flagrant violations of international law that regrettably continue to affect international relations, few have outlasted the embargo. That situation is in contrast to the virtually unanimous acknowledgment that there is a need to lift it.

Besides being illegal, the blockade against Cuba has extremely damaging effects on the Cuban people, while also affecting the rights of third countries. An unequivocal, swift and decisive halt to the embargo would constitute an important step towards normalizing regional relations and promoting cooperation in the Americas.

In 2009, we noted initial progress towards an easing of the blockade. We welcome and are closely following the measures announced in January in Washington, D.C. Those measures, positive as they may be, do not fundamentally alter the embargo; nor do they mitigate the terrible effects it imposes on the Cuban people and on third countries.

We join the unmistakable voice of the international community calling for an end to the blockade against Cuba, as expressed once again in the clearest terms by this resolution.

Mr. Adi (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to say that my country, Syria, aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Kazakhstan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations refer to the right of States to exercise sovereignty on their territory and the right to non-intervention in their internal affairs. Since its establishment, in 1945, the decisions and resolutions of the United Nations have referred to the sacred nature of those purposes and principles, which the Members of the United Nations should all respect insofar as the Charter is the constitution that represents the ultimate point of reference for the Organization.

Given that unilateral embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States, along with the new measures to tighten it, contradict the principles of international law, international humanitarian law and the rules and norms that govern relations between States — in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in their internal affairs and the freedom of international navigation and trade — this embargo is without doubt illegal. It contradicts the

criteria accepted by the international community for addressing the relations between States.

It also represents an unprecedented challenge to international law and to the legal credibility of American policies. In that regard, the Syrian Arab Republic would like to refer to the negative effects of such illegal unilateral measures on lives and societies around the world, especially in developing countries. We consider this a tool for Western hegemony that could lead to incitement against the West.

The majority of such measures are being imposed by Western countries, especially by the United States of America and European countries, in particular with the purpose of weakening the Governments of States that are Members of the United Nations or to exert pressure on them to force them to adopt certain measures or to change their policies. All those facts were confirmed by the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia that was contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/66/138, annex II).

The embargo imposed on Cuba for almost 50 years has created an unacceptable precedent that falls outside of international law. It has also subjected Cuba to all kinds of political, social and economic damage. It has deepened the suffering of the Cuban people. And it has placed the United States of America in direct confrontation with the international community. The embargo has affected the tireless efforts by the Cuban people to achieve welfare and progress. The embargo continues to harm the Cuban economy, at a cost of tens of billions of dollars — to say nothing of indirect damages, which also amount to tens of billions of dollars. Moreover, the embargo impedes the educational and social development of the Cuban people and deprives them of the opportunities and benefits of free trade. It also violates their basic human rights and freedoms, including the rights to life and development.

The General Assembly has discussed this item for 20 consecutive years. It has issued resolutions founded on its overwhelming collective consensus. However, the economic, financial, social and commercial embargo is still imposed on Cuba. The support of 186 countries for resolution 66/6 at this session confirms yet again that the vast majority of the international community finds it necessary to put an end to the embargo imposed on Cuba and that it is completely illegal.

Sanctions imposed by some States on developing countries, including sanctions by European countries and the United States against the Syrian Arab Republic, represent an ongoing collective punishment pursued by those States under the pretext of protecting human rights. They are a blatant violation of the principles of international law. They undermine the principle of the equal sovereignty of States. They constitute a violation of relevant General Assembly resolutions, the most recent being resolution 64/189. They also violate resolution 62/183 and resolution 65/217, entitled "Human rights and unilateral coercive measures", which states that unilateral economic measures damage trade relations among States and impede the full realization of the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments, specifically the right of individuals and peoples to development.

It is incumbent upon the General Assembly to take the measures necessary to put an end to the policies of embargo, unilateral economic sanctions and other hostile policies pursued by some States outside the framework of international law against both neighbouring and geographically distant countries.

The Syrian Arab Republic considers that such unilateral economic sanctions by the United States of America, the European Union and other States are a means of political and economic coercion that aim to impede the political independence and decision-making of the Syrian Arab Republic. Taking as a clear example of this the international community's rejection of the American embargo against Cuba and the Israeli embargo against Gaza, the Syrian Arab Republic and the overwhelming majority of States consider that the continued imposition by some States Members of the Organization of unilateral economic sanctions against developing countries represents a violation of the principles of international law and the rules of international trade. Such sanctions damage the economies and development efforts of developing countries, undermine international economic cooperation and impede international efforts to move towards an open and non-discriminatory multilateral trade system.

Those facts are confirmed by the summary of the *Trade and Development Report* of the United Nations

Conference on Trade and Development, which discusses the latest developments regarding the effect of unilateral sanctions on the trade of targeted countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic.

Sanctions affect mainly trade revenue, foreign exchange earnings and employment opportunities. They lead to the deterioration of economic and social conditions of populations, especially for middle- and low-income people. We hope that all forms of embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba will be lifted and that other embargoes will also lifted, including that against Syria. We hope that the voice of the international community represented by the General Assembly and other international organizations and institutions will be heard by the United States of America. We hope that the legislative branch in the United States will heed that voice.

It is for those reasons that we voted in favour of resolution 66/6.

Mrs. Waffa-Ogoo (Gambia): My delegation is of the view that, given the difficult challenges confronting all nations, big or small, rich or poor, this is neither the time nor the season to impose sanctions on States or to reinforce existing ones. Even in the best of times, sanctions, embargoes and economic blockades invariably inflict untold suffering on the citizens of the country being targeted by such punitive measures. As the global financial and economic crisis continues unabated, all nations are experiencing stress and are under constant pressure from the negative impacts of the crisis, and more so those that are targeted by blockades, such as the one carried on under the Helms-Burton Act, which has been unjustly imposed on Cuba by the Government of the United States since 1961.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is an aggression on that sovereign State that puts its economy under siege, with the consequent negative downstream effects on ordinary Cubans, particularly vulnerable groups, resulting in the deterioration of their living standards. As many delegations have pointed out, the embargo continues to undermine the capacity of the heroic Cuban people to achieve sustainable development, the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals.

In the light of what I have just said, the Government of the Gambia has been consistent and unwavering in its support of the Government and people of Cuba, in denouncing the embargo at every opportunity and in calling on the United States to repeal the laws relating to the blockade of Cuba. The Gambia has voted in support of resolution 66/6, and we will continue to support the resolutions of the Assembly on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba until such time as the United States finally heeds the deafening calls by Member States and the international community and decides to put an end to the unjust punitive sanctions it has imposed on the people of Cuba.

In conclusion, I wish to align my statement with those made earlier by the representatives of Argentina, Egypt, Kenya and Kazakhstan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of African States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, respectively. In addition, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/66/114).

Mr. Daoud (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Because there is great awareness on the part of the international community and a total rejection by Member States of the adoption of unilateral coercive economic measures beyond a country's borders, and because such measures are a means of political and economic coercion, we are today considering agenda item 41, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba". The continued support for this resolution year after year is an indication of the total rejection of the unilateral embargo imposed on Cuba due to its blatant violation of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the norms governing economic, financial and commercial relations among States.

The Government of the Sudan is pursuing a policy based on full respect for international law, the principles of the Charter and the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. In accordance with the position of the Sudan and with what I have just mentioned, my delegation condemns the imposition of economic and political sanctions on developing countries as a blatant violation of the Charter, and notes their destructive effects on the efforts of those countries to achieve sustainable development. My delegation therefore rejects unilateral sanctions, which since November 1997 have even affected our country, for they violate the legitimate

right of the people of the Sudan to choose the economic, social and political regimes conducive to achieving their aspirations and expectations.

The unilateral measures imposed by the United States against the Sudan continue to negatively affect the living conditions of the Sudanese people. They also hinder the Sudanese Government's efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, eliminate poverty, strengthen health care and education and obtain the necessary technology to promote human and agricultural development.

Despite the economic and commercial embargo on the Sudan, my country continues to strengthen its bilateral, economic and political relations with developing countries, including countries of the South and many developed countries, which has had positive effects on its economic and social development to date.

The Sudan therefore calls for the establishment of a better world where all States, big or small, can peacefully coexist. Such peaceful coexistence will require the commitment of all States to the basic principles of the Charter and to managing inter-State relations in a sound manner.

In that respect, we urge the States that have taken unilateral measures or enacted legislation that affect the sovereignty of States to take the necessary steps to invalidate or repeal such measures, in line with strengthening respect for the sovereignty of other States and for the Charter of the United Nations. Such measures will also strengthen mutual cooperation aimed at achieving peace, development and prosperity for all peoples.

Mrs. Phommachanh (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*spoke in French*): As in previous years, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has voted in favour of resolution 66/6, which was introduced in the Assembly by His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, whose presence here today we welcome.

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

For the twentieth consecutive year, the General Assembly has adopted by an overwhelming majority a resolution calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States of America and calling on all States to respect the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law and to annul or repeal all laws resulting in extraterritorial effects that violate the sovereignty of States and the legitimate interests of entities and persons under their jurisdiction, as well as of freedom of trade and navigation.

Despite the repeated calls made by the General Assembly, the embargo and its extraterritorial effects remain fully in force. That is a grave violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter and of relevant resolutions of the United Nations. The embargo has also caused considerable economic and financial losses for Cuba. It hinders the efforts of the Cuban people to eliminate poverty, promote economic and social development and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It also hinders their right to life and to development. It prevents Cuba from maintaining normal economic, commercial and financial relations with other countries. Consequently, the Lao People's Democratic Republic expresses its opposition once again to the economic, commercial and financial embargo which has been unilaterally imposed and maintained for a half century by the United States of America against Cuba.

We reiterate our support and unfailing solidarity with the Cuban people and we join the call made by the international community for the immediate end of the embargo imposed on Cuba and on its people.

Mr. Bart (Saint Kitts and Nevis): Saint Kitts and Nevis would like to add its voice in support of agenda item 41, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", and to give our reasons for voting in favour of resolution 66/6.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Belize and Argentina on behalf of the Caribbean Community and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

Over the years, Saint Kitts and Nevis has had good relations with the United States of America. That country continues to be one of our closest and strongest partners. We respect the role that the United States of America has played in international relations and in the establishment and promotion of this very body. It is a global leader, and we acknowledge and remain grateful for its role in international affairs.

We recognize its recent concession on the matter of the Cuban embargo. However, that is not enough. Friends must tell friends when they are wrong or misguided, and must be prepared to speak truth to power when it is right to do so. Today, in supporting and voting for the resolution, Saint Kitts and Nevis, despite its size, continues to be an advocate of that truth.

This is an extremely important matter that goes to the very core of international law, sovereignty, non-intervention and the strengthened role of the United Nations in international affairs. For the past 20 years, Members have voted in favour of this resolution. This year, the resolution continues to have the overwhelming support of the international community. Saint Kitts and Nevis, in its contribution to the report of the Secretary-General (A/66/114) on this matter, advised that we do not support or apply any laws or measures that restrict the free flow of international trade. We also advised that we do not apply laws with extraterritorial effect that impinge on the sovereignty of other States and the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction. This is a principled position adopted by Member States of this body.

Saint Kitts and Nevis therefore feels very strongly about bringing the embargo imposed on Cuba to an end. Cuba is one of our closest allies and is a pan-Caribbean partner. It has aided in the development of the health care system and other areas in Saint Kitts and Nevis. There is much from which the international community has benefited and can benefit in cooperating with Cuba, just as Saint Kitts and Nevis has benefited.

We see this embargo as a burden on our brothers and sisters in Cuba. The negative impact on the economy of that small developing State is quite profound, and unfair to the people of Cuba. The international community remains in the grip of a global recession. While many of us rely on partnership with other countries to recover, Cuba remains stunted by the embargo and unable to contribute to the economies of scale generated by such great partnerships. This goes against the very principle of partnership and free trade — the very principles held dear by those who support the embargo. The fact that the overwhelming majority of Member States continue to support the resolution is compelling evidence that the embargo is wrong. The impact that the embargo continues to have on access to modern medical technology and drugs cannot be ignored.

This embargo is wrong on all levels, but none more so than on humanitarian grounds. We implore all Member States to respect the sanctity of the General Assembly and the decisions it makes. Failure to do so is an affront to multilateralism and undermines the functioning of the United Nations system. It is my delegation's hope that the two countries, Cuba and the United States of America, can improve their relationship and embark on a process of partnership and cooperation.

There is much we can learn from each other, but the embargo remains an impediment to that progress. That is why Saint Kitts and Nevis supports resolution 66/6 and voted in favour of it, and why we repeat our call on both countries to find common ground so that the entire international community can move on from this impasse. We call on the United States to discontinue this embargo, because, for all the good the United States may do, the embargo continues to stain its image and character.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to sincerely congratulate the Cuban delegation on the overwhelming support for the adoption at this morning's meeting of resolution 66/6, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". It is another victory in the just struggle of the Cuban people to oppose foreign pressure and coercive acts and to foster their country's development.

It has been 20 years since this resolution was first officially introduced for consideration at the General Assembly, resulting in the adoption of resolution 47/19. In the past few decades, many documents have been adopted at major international and regional meetings, including at the General Assembly and at the Summits of the Non-Aligned Movement, denouncing the United States embargo against Cuba. Demand continues to grow at the global level for the termination of the United States unilateral coercive measures against Cuba. Nevertheless, the unilateral and immoral United States embargo on Cuba, which was imposed half a century ago, still remains in place, even today, after the first decade of the new century has already ended. It causes serious problems for the

Cuban Government and people in their efforts towards economic and social development, inflicting hundreds of billions of dollars in economic damage on the country. The embargo, being extraterritorial in nature, also seriously affects third countries that have economic and commercial relations with Cuba.

It is evident that the United States embargo on Cuba is aimed at overthrowing the social system freely chosen by the Cuban people. All these facts prove clearly that the United States leaves no stone unturned in pursuing its political agenda, and that it unilaterally defies recognized international law and the unanimous demands of the international community. My delegation strongly condemns the United States embargo against Cuba, considering that it violates the United Nations Charter and international law in every aspect, and also flagrantly and massively infringes upon the sovereignty and right to development of Cuba and its people. My delegation takes this opportunity once again to urge the United States to lift the unilateral, illegal and extraterritorial economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba as soon as possible, in response to the demand of the overwhelming majority of Member States.

Finally, my delegation expresses its continuing support for, and solidarity with, the Cuban Government and people in their active struggle to safeguard their sovereignty and work for their just cause in the face of this unprecedented United States embargo.

Mr. Stancanelli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina voted in favour resolution 66/6 and will fully implement its provisions, as we did with regard to the previous General Assembly resolutions on the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

Argentina's act No. 24871, promulgated on 5 September 1997, established a legislative framework for the scope of foreign laws on Argentine territory. Its first article states that foreign laws are not valid when they claim to have extraterritorial effect by means of an economic embargo or restriction of investments in a specific country designed to lead to a change of Government in that country or to affect its right to self-determination. Argentina's vote in favour of adopting this resolution reflects our traditional position of support for doing away with this kind of unilateral measure, as well as our commitment to the United Nations Charter, international law and multilateralism.

The embargo against Cuba contravenes the rules of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. However, despite the reiterated and almost unanimous calls for its elimination from the international community, and from the Assembly in particular, the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba endures. Argentina joins the almost unanimous rejection of the embargo and reiterates its position against such measures and its support for Cuba against the blockade.

Mr. Hamza (United Republic of Tanzania): Thank you, Sir, for granting me this opportunity to speak after the voting. My delegation aligns itself with the statements made, respectively, by the representatives of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Kenya on behalf of the Group of African States.

Please allow me to express my sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (A/66/114) on the implementation of resolution 65/6.

As we have done in previous years, this year the United Republic of Tanzania again joined other Member States to vote in favour of resolution 66/6, on ending the economic and financial embargo on Cuba. We have voted in support of the people of Cuba, who have suffered economically and socially for so long.

My delegation believes that the Cuban people have the right, as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations, to live as meaningful and as prosperous a life as any other human being in the world. The United Republic of Tanzania would like once again to reiterate its continued support for the people of Cuba in ending the embargo.

For many consecutive years, and by an overwhelming majority, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions that demand an end to the economic, trade and financial blockade and embargo policies against Cuba. Unfortunately, however, despite all the resolutions and repeated calls by this body and other international agencies, the citizens of Cuba continue to suffer as if the international community did not care.

The United Repuolic of Tanzania has always believed that an embargo of any magnitude has an adverse effect on the common people. It is always the people who suffer the most. In my country we have a

saying that says that whenever bulls fight it is the grass that gets hurt. It is high time for the suffering to end once and for all.

While we welcome the encouraging steps taken by the United States since 2009, the embargo nonetheless remains largely intact. It continues to severely constrain Cuba's development and the improvement of its citizens' standard of living. We believe that more remains to be done to ease the suffering of Cuban citizens.

The United Republic of Tanzania is of the view that an amicable solution could be reached as soon as possible if only the two parties could show political will to do so. We strongly support and believe in direct dialogue between the two parties. We therefore urge them to sit down to iron out their differences for the betterment of Cuban citizens.

Ms. Gomes (Angola): The delegation of Angola voted in favour of resolution 66/6, which I gladly welcome.

After many years of the economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, the Republic of Angola joins the international community in calling for an end to that measure, which has lasted more than half a century and constitutes a flagrant violation of human rights and of the rights of the people of Cuba.

For 20 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted a resolution urging all countries, in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, to withdraw all laws, regulations and extraterritorial measures that undermine the sovereignty of States and the legitimate rights and interests of entities and persons under the jurisdiction of those States and affect their freedom of trade and navigation.

We remain perplexed that the United States embargo against Cuba remains in place. The extraterritorial policies arising from the embargo constitute a violation of the sovereignty of States and an encroachment upon the rights of persons, entities, institutions and companies and upon the jurisdiction of such States to establish or propose economic, commercial, financial, scientific or technical relations with the Republic of Cuba, to the detriment of that country's social and economic development.

We appeal to the international community to continue its efforts to support a deeper engagement by both countries in constructive dialogue in order to identify a definitive solution to the problem. That problem is man-made, and its solution depends only on goodwill. We reiterate our appeal for such political goodwill.

According to the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/66/114, there has been no progress towards ending the embargo, even with the timid measures announced by the United States Administration, which extended the embargo for an additional year, thereby worsening the impact of its measures. The embargo goes beyond the financial and commercial relations between the United States and Cuba. Its effects in this globalized world severely penalize the Cuban people, since the embargo prevents the implementation of economic programmes aimed at the socio-economic stability of that island.

By adhering to the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, namely, respect for all relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Republic of Angola reaffirms its commitment to the norms of international law that support the need to eliminate coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic persuasion.

In that context, the Government of Angola voted in favour of the resolution, since the embargo is in flagrant violation of the right of sovereignty and equality among States, as well as the policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): A representative has asked to take the floor in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind delegations that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor now to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Rodriguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to express my thanks for the professional and fair solution found to the breakdown of the voting machine this morning.

The only justification for my speaking at this stage in the debate is the flagrant lies put forward by Mr. Godard this morning. You can fool some of the people some of the time, but not all of the people all of the time. This morning's statement by the

representative of the United States was lifted directly from the one they made last year and in 2009. Mr. Godard came here to defend the policies of President Bush from 2005. He also spoke to defend the policies of Mr. Obama, except in 2009. One has to ask whose policies he is defending.

I have here a copy of the *Daytona Beach Morning Journal* dated 16 May 1972, stating that Mr. Ronald D. Goddard, the director of the Miami Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, had been reassigned to Washington. Mr. Goddard, who had been a Peace Corps volunteer — carrying out very interesting missions, about which little is known, in Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, Chile and Turkey, as well as other projects related to Central America — was from 1969 to 1972 the head of the Miami Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs.

Another declassified official document states, as a sixth point, that the Coordinator will take on the same responsibility for covert operations as for legal ones. However, I agree with him that the blockade is just one facet of the United States policy against Cuba. He is certainly well aware that the other principal aspect is that of internal subversion, the deployment of agents in the service of the United States in our territory, and the carrying out of covert operations by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Central Intelligence Agency, with millions of dollars in funding, about which we know only a part.

As I have read out on many occasions the provisions of the Geneva Convention on genocide, I will ensure that a copy of it reaches the desk of the United States.

The Government of the United States is responsible for many extrajudicial executions, some carried out by means of drones or unmanned aircraft, in which American citizens and minors have been among those killed. It is responsible for torture, kidnapping, 1,245 covert flights and secret jails in Europe. It also maintains a concentration camp where torture is used on the land it is illegally occupying in Guantánamo, Cuba.

The United States and Cuba are not trading partners. The possibility of purchasing food, under difficult circumstances, in the United States is the result of the endeavours of those sectors that oppose the policy of the blockade. Such purchases are made under very strict regulations that cannot be described as trade relations, even less as measures indicating flexibility. They flout all the provisions of the international trading system.

Mr. Goddard deliberately lied by using two sets of statistics at this meeting. Specifically, he included in the so-called donations of humanitarian aid to Cuba funds that USAID uses to undermine constitutional order in my country; remittances that Cubans living in the United States send to their family members, despite official regulations and restrictions; and donations that non-governmental organizations provide with great difficulty, given the position of the United States Government, and which in 2010 were extremely scanty.

The United States has better things to do than wage wars that have killed more than a million civilians. Instead of destabilizing foreign Governments, it would do better to heed the voices of its own people. Near where we are now, on Wall Street, instead of brutally repressing its citizens, it should listen to what they are saying. They are complaining that there is no true democracy when everything is determined by economic power, when corporations put profits before the protection of people, when egoism triumphs over justice, when inequality and oppression prevail in the Government. People complain that they have lost their homes, their pensions and their social security programmes, while the rich continue to receive shocking bonuses. They complain that students are burdened by debt, the courts of justice are corrupt, and that millions of dollars are being spent to eliminate health insurance contracts for workers. They also lament the fact that the United States participates in the torture and assassination of innocent civilians extraterritorially and that it perpetuates colonialism.

A total of 1,972 people have been executed in that country since 1976 as a result of judicial errors. More than 3,000 United States citizens are currently on Death Row. A few weeks ago, even as the General Assembly debate was being held, the world was aghast at the unjust execution of Troy Davis.

So when Mr. Goddard says that the American citizen and USAID contractor was brought to justice in Cuba for having provided Internet access to the Jewish community, he knows perfectly well, being a specialist in that area, that Mr. Gross was carrying out a covert

operation and that he had committed crimes that are also punishable under United States law.

In Cuba, children want to know why in that country terrorists are left free and anti-terrorists are jailed. The five anti-terrorist fighters from Cuba have suffered under cruel, inhuman and degrading conditions for the only crime of trying to prevent the commission of terrorist acts against the people of the United States. They must all be freed, even the one who is on conditional release and cannot rejoin his family. That would be an act of justice, and, at the very least, a humanitarian one. Only in a country such as the United States would the Chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs — a fierce woman — pay tribute to the international terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, who was responsible for the bombing of a civilian aircraft in mid-flight, and refer to the members of a children's theatre troupe visiting the United States as spies and terrorists.

The political battle being waged today clearly shows, as Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz wrote yesterday in an article on the genocidal role of NATO, "the need to put an end not just to the blockade but also to the system that engenders injustice on our planet, degrades its natural resources and jeopardizes human survival.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the only speaker in exercise of the right of reply.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 41?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.